

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 24, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 1, 2013

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 17, 2013

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 524**

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**Introduced by Senators Lara and Steinberg**

February 21, 2013

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An act to add Chapter 16.5 (commencing with Section 11550) to Part 7 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 524, as amended, Lara. Pupil instruction: Pathways Curriculum Task Force.

Existing law establishes a system of public elementary and secondary schools in this state, and authorizes local educational agencies throughout the state to operate schools and provide instruction to pupils in kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive (K-12). Existing law also establishes a system of postsecondary education in the state that consists of 4 segments: the University of California, the California State University, the California Community Colleges, and independent institutions of higher education.

This bill would express the intent of the Legislature to develop a voluntary K-12 curriculum to educate pupils and their families about college and career opportunities. The bill would require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to appoint, and provide staff for, a 12-member Pathways Curriculum Task Force. The bill would specify the qualifications and duties of the members of the task force. The bill would require the task force to establish specified learning goals for

pupils at elementary, middle, and high school levels and help pupils to achieve these goals. The bill would require the task force to develop a pathways curriculum that, among other things, would provide materials, resources, and information for K-12 pupils and their families to gain a comprehensive understanding of available opportunities in postsecondary educational institutions.

The bill would express the intent of the Legislature that local educational agencies consider adopting all or parts of the career and college pathways curriculum, but would specify that adoption of the curriculum would not be mandatory and that local educational agencies may decline to participate.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: no.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the  
2 following:

3 (1) California makes a major investment in three  
4 world-renowned systems of higher education: the University of  
5 California, the California State University, and the California  
6 Community Colleges. In addition, California is home to prestigious  
7 independent universities and a significant number of vocational  
8 and specialized private institutions. Yet many pupils complete  
9 their senior year of high school with little understanding of these  
10 institutions, poor knowledge of financial aid programs, and few  
11 tools for making wise postsecondary educational choices. Pupils  
12 from disadvantaged backgrounds, pupils who would be the first  
13 in their families to go to college, and pupils with poor academic  
14 records are often the least informed.

15 (2) The lack of information about postsecondary educational  
16 opportunity erodes the effectiveness of California’s investment in  
17 higher education, and exacerbates attempts to provide skilled  
18 workers for California’s economy. According to the Public Policy  
19 Institute of California, California will need one million more  
20 college graduates by 2025 than current trends will produce.  
21 California’s evolving economy will also need significantly more  
22 skilled workers with associate degrees and career certificates.  
23 California cannot afford to let pupils reach adulthood uninformed

1 of the institutions and programs available to help them become  
2 productive members of society.

3 (3) The Legislature recently broadened the Academic  
4 Performance Index to include indicators of college and career  
5 preparedness, in addition to state test scores. To assist schools in  
6 improving these new benchmarks, some classroom attention to  
7 college eligibility requirements and the value of postsecondary  
8 education and training could be helpful to schools and local school  
9 districts.

10 (4) Pathway guidance is too often left to chance. The  
11 development of opportunities for school districts to incorporate  
12 such guidance into their programs is an appropriate school  
13 responsibility. Effective pathway instructional programs can be  
14 an efficient and effective way to complement the important work  
15 of school counselors.

16 (5) Postsecondary education and training has become  
17 increasingly expensive in both public and private institutions;  
18 student and family debt burden has grown dramatically in recent  
19 years. It is in the state's interest to ensure that students and families  
20 understand the serious nature of student indebtedness, receive  
21 information on maximizing access to grant and work opportunities  
22 to reduce indebtedness, and are provided with alternatives and  
23 strategies to avoid excessive debt.

24 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to develop a K-12  
25 curriculum to educate pupils and their families about the rich array  
26 of college and career opportunities available and how appropriate  
27 K-12 course taking and academic proficiency can ensure that pupils  
28 can meet their college and career goals. It is also the intent of the  
29 Legislature that such a pathway curriculum will educate pupils  
30 and their families about the cost of postsecondary education and  
31 the best ways to pay for it.

32 SEC. 2. Chapter 16.5 (commencing with Section 11550) is  
33 added to Part 7 of Division 1 of Title 1 of the Education Code, to  
34 read:

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36 CHAPTER 16.5. PATHWAYS CURRICULUM TASK FORCE

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38 11550. (a) (1) The Superintendent shall appoint and staff a  
39 Pathways Curriculum Task Force to develop a voluntary curriculum  
40 for kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive, that will provide

1 pupils and their families with a basic understanding of  
2 postsecondary educational institutions, options, programs, and  
3 opportunities in California. The task force shall consist of 12  
4 members, including all of the following:

5 (A) Four persons representing postsecondary education.

6 (B) Four persons representing elementary and secondary  
7 education.

8 (C) Two public members.

9 (D) One person representing nonprofit organizations whose  
10 missions are focused on increased participation in postsecondary  
11 education.

12 (E) One person with expertise in career preparation or  
13 apprenticeship.

14 (2) The Superintendent is encouraged to include persons with  
15 specific knowledge and background in college admissions, financial  
16 aid, postsecondary educational opportunities, and development of  
17 a curriculum for kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

18 (b) The task force shall establish learning goals for pupils at  
19 elementary, middle, and high school levels, and shall develop  
20 curriculum to help pupils achieve those goals. The task force shall,  
21 at a minimum, address all of the following topics:

22 (1) The variety of college, university, and technical education  
23 in California.

24 (2) The importance of postsecondary education and training.

25 (3) Ways to finance postsecondary education and training, and  
26 attention to cost-benefit analysis.

27 (4) The A-G course sequence required for admission to the  
28 University of California, postsecondary education admission  
29 requirements, and the community college transfer process.

30 (c) The task force shall solicit and consider input from a broad  
31 range of interested persons, agencies, and organizations, including,  
32 but not necessarily limited to, the Student Aid Commission, the  
33 Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education, specialists in  
34 elementary and secondary curriculum, school counselors, experts  
35 in federal and state financial aid and college admissions, and civil  
36 rights and nonprofit organizations whose missions are related to  
37 career preparation and college access, business, labor, parents, and  
38 pupils.

1 (d) The task force shall appoint a subgroup to consult with  
2 specialists in high school economics curriculum to develop a unit  
3 on postsecondary education.

4 (e) The pathways curriculum developed pursuant to this chapter  
5 shall accomplish all of the following:

6 (1) Be as concise and clear as possible so as to easily integrate  
7 with other curriculum objectives, while still helping pupils gain a  
8 comprehensive understanding of postsecondary educational  
9 opportunity.

10 (2) Include complementary materials for family and guardians  
11 to learn what steps in elementary, middle, and high school they  
12 may take to assist their pupils reach college and career goals, as  
13 well as suggested questions to ask of school officials.

14 (3) Provide a cumulative resource for pupils and their families  
15 who come to California from other states and other countries and  
16 enter the California elementary and secondary education system  
17 at various grade levels.

18 (4) Provide pathway curriculum materials as well as suggestions  
19 for college and work site field trips, guest speakers, and other  
20 innovative means of inspiring and informing pupils and their  
21 families about college and career pathways.

22 (5) Provide information on the availability of, and access to,  
23 the most current information on postsecondary educational  
24 opportunities, including, but not necessarily limited to, federal and  
25 state Internet Web sites devoted to postsecondary educational  
26 opportunity and how best to navigate those sites.

27 (f) The task force shall develop the pathways curriculum within  
28 one year of its first convening, and shall accomplish all of the  
29 following:

30 (1) Transmit the pathways curriculum to the Senate Committee  
31 on Appropriations, the Senate Committee on Education, the  
32 Assembly Committee on Appropriations, the Assembly Committee  
33 on Education, the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, the  
34 state board, the Regents of the University of California, the  
35 Trustees of the California State University, the Board of Governors  
36 of the California Community Colleges, the Chancellor of the  
37 California Community Colleges, the Student Aid Commission,  
38 and the Instructional Quality Commission for a three-month review  
39 and comment period.

1 (2) Consider comments and make changes as deemed  
2 appropriate.

3 (3) Transmit the curriculum to the department, where it shall  
4 be available for school district and school use and where it shall  
5 be maintained. The Superintendent shall assume leadership  
6 responsibilities for dissemination of the curriculum to school  
7 districts, professional educational organizations, and civic  
8 organizations throughout the state.

9 (g) The task force shall recommend, and the department shall  
10 determine and implement, an annual process by which the pathways  
11 curriculum shall remain current in the rapidly changing and  
12 complex environment of postsecondary educational opportunity.  
13 The Chancellor of the California State University and the  
14 Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall, and the  
15 President of the University of California is requested to, provide  
16 cooperation and support to the department in this regard.

17 ~~(h) The department shall work with the Instructional Quality  
18 Commission and appropriate framework committees to integrate  
19 the pathways curriculum into each subject matter curriculum  
20 framework as it is revised or updated.~~

21 (i)  
22 (h) Schools and school districts may use and deliver this  
23 curriculum in a manner that best suits local needs and resources.

24 SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that local educational  
25 agencies consider adopting all or parts of the career and college  
26 pathways curriculum. However, adoption is not mandatory, and  
27 local educational agencies may decline to participate.